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Kathleen Ashline
7 Henry St.
Albany, NY 12203

May 31, 2001

U.S. Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 106 1
Rockville, MD 20852

Gentlemen:

Re: Docket 98P-0151/CP1

I am writing to you in support of Petition 98P-0151/CP1 which would prohibit the slaughter of downed animals for human food. As a consumer concerned about the risks to human health inherent in processing meat from downed animals, and as a compassionate person who feels a responsibility to ensure that farm animals are treated in the most humane way possible, I urge you most strenuously to grant the petition. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) recognized the health risks inherent in meat from downed animals and announced a new policy regarding the purchase of meat from downed animals in June 2000. "...AMS can do more to raise the quality of products purchased and consumer confidence in the meat products provided to children in the National School Lunch Program and recipients in other Federal food and nutrition programs. Beginning with School Year (SY) 2000-2001 purchases, AMS will require Contractors and their suppliers to meet the following requirements: ...have an operating policy that does not allow processing of nonambulatory cattle commonly known as "downers" into meat products." This policy affects over 100 million pounds of ground beef products that annually are purchased for Federal programs. This same risky meat will continue to enter the market and end up on the American consumer's table until Congress acts to protect both animals and consumers.

THE FDA HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO ACT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC AND NOT TAKE MAJOR RISKS WITH OUR HEALTH.

F A C T S

Downed animals cannot be moved humanely. They, are pushed With tractors or dragged with chains.

98P-0151

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Downed animals can carry diseases that infect humans and other animals who consume them. Some downers may be afflicted with a form of BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy Mad Cow Disease"). This disease has been linked to Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, which is fatal in humans.

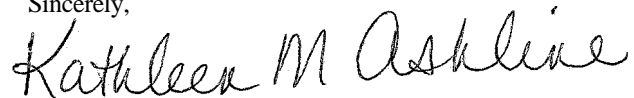
Downers, due to their debilitated condition, increase the risk that E. Coli and other bacterial infections will enter the food supply.

Downed animals comprise a small percentage of animals slaughtered yearly in the US. Prohibiting their marketing will not cause undue economic hardship but will relieve 'thousands of animals of unconscionable suffering.

Most conditions such as dehydration, rough handling and transportation of prematurely weaned animals that lead to downers can be eliminated and 90% of downed animal situations can be prevented. Removing the market for downed animals will provide the necessary incentive to industry to improve husbandry practices where needed.

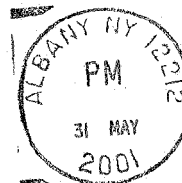
My family and I will be following the progress of the above-named petition and hope to hear a positive response very soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen M Ashline". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Kathleen M. Ashline

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7 Henry St.
Albany, NY 12203



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